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ABSTRACT

A national survey of 1,493 humanities faculty at 156 two-year colleges was conducted in spring 1975. The colleges included in the sample were carefully selected in terms of locale, control, emphasis, size, and age, and the faculty sample included proportionate numbers of full- and part-time faculty members. This paper compares social science instructors in the sample to the total group of faculty. Social science instructors represented the second smallest of the 11 selected subgroups--46 people, or 3 percent of the total. A variety of teaching responsibilities were represented in the subgroup, including general social science, geography, cultural geography, ethnic studies, and political science. College majors of the sample also varied, including social studies, geography, education, history, and political science. Although only 25.9 percent of the total sample had been students in two-year colleges, 32.6 percent of this subgroup had been. The ratio between male and female instructors was about the same for the total sample and for this group, but a larger percentage of this group represented ethnic minorities. Information on age, research, professional development, affiliations, and teaching duties is also summarized, and compared to the characteristics of the total sample. (Author/NHM)

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CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE INSTRUCTORS IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

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Florence B. Brawer

February, 1976

A nationwide study of two-year college humanities faculty revealed many who were teaching ethnic studies, cultural geography, education, and other fields not typically classified within one of the major humanities disciplinary groups. This paper recounts some of their responses to the survey form. The data were drawn from the above study conducted in Spring 1975 by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges, Los Angeles under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF TWO-YEAR COLLEGE SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

A national survey of 1493 people teaching the humanities in 156 two-year colleges--carefully selected in terms of locale, control, emphasis, size and age--was conducted in spring 1975, by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges. The faculty sample was drawn to include proportionate numbers of both full-time and part-time instructors. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the project revealed data on such constructs as concern for students, reference group identification, satisfaction, and preference for further preparation, as well as on demographic dimensions. In this paper the social science instructors in the sample are compared with the total group of faculty in art, anthropology, foreign language, history, liberal arts/drama, literature, music, philosophy, political science, and religious studies.

Social science instructors in our sample represent one of the smallest disciplines--46 people or 3% of the total. Indeed, next to religious studies (30, or 2%), they are the smallest. Because the social sciences includes not only general social science courses but also, cultural geography and ethnic studies, among these few people is a variety of teaching responsibilities. More specifically, 58.7% of the instructors who fall into this category list the social sciences as their principal teaching field. In descending order, they next list geography (30.4%) and then political science (15.2%) followed by a few other scattered disciplines. Majors of highest degree for these 46 instructors also varied. The largest

clustering was 28.3% for social studies, followed by 21.7% geography, 19.6% education, 17.4% history, and 15.2% political science. Again, other fields are occasionally--and often unexpectedly--noted: guidance and counseling, liberal arts, life sciences, literature, mathematics, philosophy, psychology, and religious studies.

Next to the anthropologists, more social scientists (32.6%; 25.1% total) had been students in two-year colleges. They are closest to the total group of respondents in their male-female representation--67.4% males and 32.6% females in the social sciences, 66.7% males and 33.3% females in the total group. They cluster primarily at the 41-45 age bracket (26.1% social science; 13.1% total) and then at 31-35 years (23.9% social science; 20.3% total).

Social scientists are the one disciplinary group that can claim a larger number of ethnic minorities. Whereas 90.6% of the total group are white/Caucasians, 73.9% of this discipline so note. Oriental backgrounds account for 10.9% of this discipline (0.9% total); Black/Negroes, 6.5% (2.6% total) and Mexican-American/Chicanos, 6.5% (1.9% total). This mix undoubtedly reflects the ethnic studies component of this disciplinary group.

The highest clustering of these people (32.6%; 38.3% total) claims 200 books in the homes in which they were raised. Thirty point four percent (25.7% total) indicate 26-100 books and 19.6% (19% total), 101-200 books.

Experience

When asked about their experiences as instructors or administrators in secondary schools, 37% of the social scientists (41.1% total) said they had not been so involved. Five to 10 years was claimed by 19.6% (17.7% total) and 3-4 years by 13% (10.4% total). Beyond the level of teaching or research

assistant, 50% of the social scientists (54.7% total) had not worked in a four-year college or university. The largest single group (13%; 11.6% total) claimed 1-2 years at this level. Like the total group, the most popular number of years spent as a faculty member in any two-year college was 5-10 years (32.6% social science; 37.7% total). Three to four and 11-20 years accounted for the same number of social scientists (21.7%).

Fifty-two point two percent of the social science instructors, as compared with 66.8% of the total group, claimed no time as department or division chairpersons. Yet, 15.2% of the social science people and only 10% of the total failed to respond to this item, which undoubtedly qualifies the response. Fifteen point two percent of the social science instructors claimed one to two years as chairpersons. Only four point three percent had been directors of special programs, (and this for but 3-4 years) and only 2.2% had functioned as administrators (1-2 years). Regarding the years they had worked in their current institutions, 30.4% claimed 5-10 years; 23.9%, 11-20 years; and 19.6% each, 1-2 and 3-4 years.

Of those social science people who claimed responsibilities as chairpersons, 21.7% were acting in this capacity at the time they completed the Faculty Survey. Seventy percent of this subset said they had previously employed people with doctorates, 80% claimed no pressure either way to hire or not hire, and 80% said they planned to hire doctoral degree holders. Forty percent said they would hire the best person regardless of degree; 20% felt that people holding the doctorate were more capable and knowledgeable than those with lesser degrees; 30% reported that performances of people holding the doctorate were the same as those of other teachers; and 20% felt

that these people were good leaders with high professional qualities.

Teaching Hours-Full/Part-Time Status

Social science instructors are unlike any other disciplinary group in that their teaching hours modal score falls at 10-12 hours weekly rather than 13-15. Most social science instructors tend to teach fewer hours per week than do instructors in other areas. At the same time, 34.7% of the social scientists teach more than the greatest grouping of 26.1% at 10-12 hours. The next largest cluster for this group falls at the 13-15 hour time span, in which 17.4% find themselves. Four to six hours of teaching is claimed by 15.2%, a finding that points to a fair number of part-time instructors in the social sciences.

Actually, 26.1% say they are not full-time faculty members--and exactly the same number indicate that they are employed at a job in addition to their teaching. Of those so engaged, 33.3% claim 11-20 hours; 25%, 1-10 and 31-40 hours; and 16.7%, 21-30 hours.

Reference Groups

Social science people are much like the total group in terms of the way they look to various reference people as sources of advice on teaching. They, like most faculty groups, select colleagues first, then students, department chairpersons, professional journals, university professors, high school teachers, and programs of professional organizations (tied) and administrators.

Journals

Interestingly, social scientists follow only philosophers in terms of claiming to read no scholarly journals within their field (whereas 25.7% of

the total group report none here, 35.7% of the philosophy instructors and 34.8% of the social science instructors so designate). The differences here seem also to pertain to journals over three, since 21.7% of the social scientists claim one; 19.6%, two; and 17.4%, three. On the other hand, social scientists who claim to read no professional education journals (65.2%) are closer to the total group (63.9%) and by no means are at the top here. For those who do indicate subscribing to and/or reading these types of journals, the largest cluster is at "one" where 23.9% (22.6% total) of the population is found.

As for journals or magazines of general interest, next to anthropologists the social scientists are fewest in claiming none. So indicating are 78.4% of the total group, 59.5% of the anthropologists, and 67.4% of the social scientists. Nineteen percent of the social science people claim two such journals (5.2% total and 16.7% anthropologists) and 8.7% (11.5% total, 19% anthropologists) point to one.

Professional Development

Noting current work toward the doctorate are 28.3% of the social scientists (23.6% total). Ten point nine percent (7% total) indicate they are working on their masters degree. Yet, 78.3% of the instructors in this field, as compared with 85.9% of the total, answer yes to the question, "Would you like to take steps toward professional development in the next five years?" Of these respondents, 44.4% (total 33.8%) say they would like to get a Ph.D. or Ed.D.; 22.2% (32.4% total), enroll in courses in a university; and 11.1% (9.4% total), enroll in in-service courses at their university.

If they had a free summer, one-half of the 46 people in this small

subset indicated they would like to travel (52.8% total). This generally popular choice is followed by combinations of meeting classes/doing research/conducting workshops (28.3% social science; 41.6% total); taking classes/studying/reading (21.7% social science; 33.3% total); recreation/rest (17.4% for both the social scientists and the total population); write for publication (15.2% social science; 14.1% total); and work on advanced degree (15.2% social science; 8.2% total).

Were they to start their pre-teaching training all over again, more dissatisfaction is expressed among the social science respondents than any other group. Only 26.1%, as compared with 33.2% of the total population, reply that they would do the same/change nothing. And more social scientists fail to respond to this item than any other disciplinary group (17.4%; total 11.5%).

Five Years Hence

An item that touches on the respondents' level of satisfaction with their current job situation is one that offers nine potential responses to the question, "Five years from now (1980) you might be considering the following positions. How attractive do they appear to you at this time?" The social science instructors vary only slightly from the total group in their responses to this item. Both the social scientists and the total group rank, in order of importance, 1) a faculty position in a four-year college or university, 2) doing what they are currently doing, 3) a school outside the United States, and 4) a faculty position at other two-year college. Tied for 5th are an administrative position in a two-year college (five for the total) and a position in a professional association (7th for

the total) and tied for 6th are any position but this college (9th for the total) and a non-teaching, non-academic position (6th for total). Last (8th for the total group) is "have no idea."

Affiliation

Affiliation with others was assessed in the Faculty Survey by means of two devices--relationship to professional organizations and to certain significant others in the respondents' lives. The social scientists showed a slightly lesser tendency to join professional organizations than the total sample, 26.1% responding with "none" when asked about membership in groups as compared with 22.5% of the total. "One," was offered by 23.9% of the social science people, 27.1% of the total; "two," by 15.2% and 23.9% respectively; and three organizations by 23.9% of the social scientists and 15.9% of the total.

As for attendance at regional or national meetings, 56.5% of the social scientists and 54.9% of the total group responded with "none." The social scientists attended one (17.4%), two (8.7%) and three (15.2%), whereas the total group claimed one (24.2%), two (12.9%), and three (5.9%). Few people in any group presented papers--89.1% social scientists responding in the negative and 90.4% of the total. Eight point seven percent of the social scientists and 8.1% of the total group claimed one paper presentation.

When it comes to their relationship with seven special groups, first, second, sixth and seventh choices are the same for both the social scientists and total population. The third for the social scientists is fifth for the total, fourth is third, and fifth is fourth. The social scientists' rankings, in order of closeness to the seven groups are from most to least related:

friends, family, students, other instructors in their field, most instructors at their school, teacher organizations, and college administrators.

Students

Like the historians and political scientists, the social scientists select "knowledge of and interest in community and world problems" as the most important quality students should gain from a two-year college education. The selection of this quality separates this trio of humanists from the other sampled disciplines. Next, and again like the history and political science instructors, they choose self knowledge and a sense of personal identity, preparation for further formal education, knowledge and skills directly applicable to their careers, aesthetic awareness, and an understanding and mastery of some academic discipline.

Also like the other two disciplines, as well as all other groups, the social scientists choose six or more humanities courses as the number that two-year college occupational students should be required to take, followed by four, then three, two, one and none.

As for other than course related presentations, agreements among all disciplines is apparent. At least fifty percent of the social scientists feel that colloquiums and seminars, exhibits, and concerts and lectures are too few at their colleges. Forty-one point three percent agree that films are too few, although 47.8% say they are sufficient.

Extra-curricular Activities and Curriculum

All groups report that they experience the humanities, other than through their teaching, primarily by visiting art museums, attending shows,

exhibits, concerts, theatres, and films. Fifty-two point two percent of the social scientists, as compared with 58.6% of the total population, so report. Reading was indicated by 41.3% of the social scientists, 50% of the total; attending classes, lectures, seminars by 19.6% of the social scientists and 18.6% of the total; and listening to records, watching TV and radio by 17.4% of the social scientists, 21.% of the total.

As for changes in humanities instruction that had taken place at the respondents' colleges in the past seven years, 26.1% of the social scientists and 29.1% of the total group indicate added and improved humanities courses. Improved teaching techniques was reported by 6.5% of this subgroup and 4.1% of the total. Changes they would like to see effected follow the same pattern, with 17.4% of the social scientists and 30.1% of the total pointing to the addition/improvement of humanities courses. Interestingly, though, an equal number of social scientists (17.4%; 13.9% total) suggest the integration of humanities into interdisciplinary courses. More extra-curricular courses are advocated by 13% of the social scientists, 10.6% of the total sample and more student interest in courses by 10.7% of the social scientists and 4.1% of the total.

The Colleges

A slightly smaller percent of the social scientists (84.8%) than either the historians (90.7%) or political scientists (91.4%) are in public two-year colleges (88.5% or 1322 of the total population of 1493 subjects). Slightly fewer social scientists (78.3%; history, 91.5%; law/government, 84.2%, and total, 89.8%) are also in comprehensive colleges. The bulk of these 46 subjects (60.9%) are in older schools (built in 1959 and earlier) whereas

34.8% are in schools opened between 1960 and 1969.

Social scientists tend to teach in two-year institutions with large enrollments--23.9% (10.9% total) in colleges of 10,000-14,999 students and 15.2% (12.9% total), with student populations of 15,000 and larger.

In Sum

Considering the duality and sometimes triplicity of teaching responsibilities, it is not surprising that social scientists are much like the history and law/government instructors in our nationwide sample of humanities instructors. Differences among these three disciplines is miniscule, and formed on very few variables. Rather, one needs to compare the three disciplines with the total population in order to see where differences lie--for example, the fact that more social scientists than the total had themselves been students in two-year colleges, were working for the doctorate, and tended to be in the 41-45 and 31-35 age ranges.

In terms of our basic constructs, more historians (16.7%) and political scientists (20.9%) fall into the high satisfaction groups than social scientists (8.7%), with 17% of the total population so indicating. Social scientists (23.3%) tend to be higher in Functional Potential, a hypothetical construct indicating ego strength, than history (11.8%), law/government (6.5%) or instructors in the total group (10.1%). Similarly, they tend to be more involved in curriculum and instruction than the others (26.1% social scientists; 20.7% history; 9.4% law/government; 14.8% total) and slightly more concerned for students (10.9% social scientists; 9.9% total; 9.3% history; 9.4% law/government). More social scientists (19.6%) fall into the high concern with humanities group than the total population (14.3%) or the

history (16.7%) or law/government (15.8%) sample. They tend to look less to the university as reference group than the others (social science, 10%; total, 16.5%; history, 22.8%; law/government, 12.9%).

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